

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 EB-08 FAA-00 DOTE-00 L-03 COME-00
DODE-00 /063 W

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R 141514Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1110

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1257

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, EAIR, ECON, ETRD, BF, US

SUBJ: NAVFAC ELEUTHERA AIRFIELD, GOVERNORS HARBOUR, ELEUTHERA

REF: (A) NASSAU A-1 (B) NASSAU 1140 (C) NASSAU 1134

1. AT MONTHLY AIRPORT SECURITY MEETING JUNE 7 REGULARLY
ATTENDED BY JOHN GARNER, CHIEF, ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SECTION,
BAHAMASAIR OFFICIAL RAISED NEED FOR BAHAMAS DEPARTMENT OF
AVIATION TO UPGRADE AND EXPAND CERTAIN OF ITS AIRPORT
FACILITIES--SO AS TO BETTER COMPLY WITH FAA SECURITY
REGULATIONS FOR BOARDING PASSENGERS ON DIRECT BAHAMASAIR
FLIGHTS FROM OUT ISLAND AIRSTRIPS TO SOUTH FLORIDA. IN
REPLY, DON INGRAM, DIRECTOR, DEPT OF AVIATION, STATED
THAT HE ALREADY HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORMULATION
OF SPECIFICATIONS FOR CERTAIN AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION
TENDERS, INCLUDING EXPANSION OF THE RUNWAY OF THE NAVFAC
ELEUTHERA AIRPORT AT GOVERNORS HARBOUR. WITH REGARD TO
THIS FACILITY HE FURTHER STATED THAT THIS TENDER WOULD
NOT BE ANNOUNCED UNTIL THE USG HAD OFFICIALLY GIVEN ITS
GO AHEAD WHICH THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM WAS STILL
AWAITING.

2. BALTRON BETHEL, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TOURISM,
MINISTRY OF TOURISM, RAISED MATTER OF USG RESPONSE
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TO REFS B AND C DURING LUNCHEON ENGAGEMENT WITH
GARNER ON SAME DAY. GARNER INFORMED BETHEL THAT
THE EMBASSY HAD TO DATE RECEIVED NO REPLY TO OUR
OUTGOING MESSAGE ON THIS SUBJECT. BETHEL STATED
THAT "IT IS CRITICAL THAT WE RECEIVE A REPLY (HOPE-
FULLY POSITIVE) TO THIS REQUEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
SO THAT CONSTRUCTION COULD BEGIN IMMEDIATELY ON

THE AIRPORT EXTENSION." HE ADDED "EXTENSION OF THIS RUNWAY IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO HIS MINISTRY'S OVERALL OUT-ISLAND TOURISM CAMPAIGN (REF A) AND IN CONNECTION WITH THE AWARDING OF NEW OR ADDITIONAL ROUTES TO AMERICAN OR EUROPEAN CARRIERS DESIRING TO FLY TO THE BAHAMAS FACILITIES." BETHEL ALSO STATED THAT HE HOPED THAT USG RESPONSE WOULD NOT BECOME TIED TO SIGNATURE OF MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT, AND VOLUNTEERED THAT MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WOULD BE GOING TO WASHINGTON LATER THIS MONTH ON FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT ADDERLEY WAS UNDER THE PRIME MINISTER'S INSTRUCTIONS TO CONCLUDE A MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT WITH THE USG BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. BETHEL FURTHER ADDED THAT MINISTER ADDERLEY WAS NO LONGER CONDUCTING A "ONE MAN SHOW" IN THESE DELIBERATIONS AND WOULD BE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CABINET.

3. GIVEN GCOB INTEREST IN RECEIVING A RESPONSE TO THEIR NOTE ON AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION AT GOVERNOR'S HARBOUR, EMBASSY HOPES THAT DEPT WILL NOT DELAY FURTHER IN RESPONDING TO REFS B AND C.
SCHWARTZ

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